

Let's turn to another tragedy, for which liberals have proposed as a solution, additional restrictions on the Second Amendment. It is important that we look at the circumstances and see if their solution would have addressed the problem.

In early March, a six year old boy brought a gun to school and shot a six year old little girl. This is an unspeakable tragedy and my heart goes out to the little girl's family. No one should have their little girl taken from them in a senseless act of violence. At its root, this tragedy is a reflection of moral decay in our society. It reflects a lack of value on human life in American society today.

As we as a nation consider a response to this tragedy, it is important to look at the specific events that led to this tragedy. The six year old who shot his classmate was living with his uncle in a crack house. The boy's father is in jail for a burglary charge. ABC's Nightline indicates that the boy's father had at least five children by four different women. The mother had been evicted from her apartment. The gun the boy used was sitting out in a bedroom, underneath some sheets and was a stolen gun. It has been reported that the gun may have been traded for drugs. The father described his son as enjoying violent movies and television shows. And, teachers described the boy as aggressive and a bully. They also stated that he had been suspended from school twice, once for fighting and a second time for stabbing a little girl with a pencil.

Mr. Clinton has already laid the blame for this tragedy at the feet of Congress for not approving his gun control proposals. The reality is his gun proposals would have done nothing to stop this tragedy, and he refuses to admit that the problem in this case runs much deeper into the soul of this individual, his relatives, and our nation. Mr. Clinton's statement is a shameful exploitation of this tragedy to secure support for legislation that would have done nothing to prevent this tragedy. Too often the media and politicians point to the need for additional gun control as the "solution" because they do not have any other answers or lack the will to consider the root causes that lead to these tragedies.

It appears that this child was raised in a culture of violence with little respect for the rights of others, including the right to life. The blame for this tragedy rests primarily with the parents who failed to teach this child to respect life and others. Also, the peddlers of violence in our society are also partly to blame. Professor William Allen, at Michigan State University, said it best when he stated, "When you have 6 year olds shooting 6 year olds, you are not talking about crimes anymore, you're talking about moral decay."

We are dealing with a cultural meltdown. Many are proposing simple, quick fix solutions. However, we must recognize that there are no quick fixes to such a tragedy. At the root of this tragedy is a corruption of the heart and soul of our nation. We must work to restore a value on life.

We must counter the message that some adults in our society are sending is that some life is expendable. Children learn from our actions. Not only do many of our movies, music lyrics, and video games portray life as expendable, but many of the actions of adults in our society convey this message as well. When our children see adults, including political leaders, advocating the acceptance of drugs, eu-

thanasia, partial-birth abortions, and abortion on demand, adults devalue life and teach our young people that life is expendable.

Today, we must ask ourselves if we will have the courage to confront the root causes of violence. I am once again reminded of the comments made by Mother Teresa in 1994, when she stated "Our children depend on us for everything—their health, their nutrition, their security, their coming to love and know God. For all of this, they look to us with trust, hope, and expectation. But often father and mother are so busy they have no time for their children . . . So their children go to the streets and get involved in drugs or other things. We are talking of love of the child, which is where love and peace must begin." We as a nation must heed this advice.

We must work to renew in our society a respect for the value that human life has. Only if society places a higher value on life will we be able to make serious progress in reducing the violence in our society.

DEBT REDUCTION RECONCILIATION ACT OF 2000

SPEECH OF

HON. GARY G. MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 20, 2000

Mr. GARY MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4601 the "Debt Reduction Reconciliation Act of 2000." It is time for the U.S. Congress and the President to start living the way American families do.

When a family owes money on a credit card, loan, or car, they pay a price to borrow that money—an interest rate. Interest rates make the purchase made by that credit card or loan or the car more expensive; hence, there is a financial incentive to pay the debt off as quickly as possible. Unfortunately, it seems that too many members of Congress and this President have forgotten what interest rates and debt really mean.

Our refusal to be mindful of simple accounting methods has resulted in the rapid accumulation of surplus revenues in the U.S. Treasury Department's operating cash accounts. At the same time, we have a public debt of \$3.54 trillion. However, we currently lack the mechanism needed to apply these surplus funds to the debt quickly. At this time, the Treasury may only issue less debt, reverse auctions, or purchase debt instruments. While these tools are useful, specific economic conditions influence which method can be employed at what exact time, limiting the options of the Treasury Department.

A more flexible solution is needed, and we have one in H.R. 4601. The "Debt Reduction Reconciliation Act of 2000" would protect the on-budget surplus revenues collected during the remainder of fiscal year 2000 and appropriate them for debt reduction by depositing them in a designated "off budget Public Debt Reduction Account." By moving the surplus out of the Treasury's operating cash accounts, appropriators would not be tempted to spend money they do not really have.

The "Public Debt Reduction Account" would give the Treasury flexibility to use its existing debt reduction tools in the most effective manner. Surplus revenues deposited in this ac-

count would remain available until utilized for debt reduction. Most importantly, the Treasury would be able to schedule reverse auctions at the most advantageous times, make funds available to brokers buying back debt on the open markets, or decrease the size of new debt issues—depending on which mechanism, or combination of tools, proves most cost effective.

It is also important to note that H.R. 4601 applies only to the surpluses for this current fiscal year. The "Public Debt Reduction Account" is not intended to become an automatic allocation as other accounts are, and in no way would this bill tie the hands of appropriators in the future.

Too often, we state that policy goals are worthy of implementation—some time in the not so near future. Right now, our economy is robust and healthy. In fact, Federal Reserve Chairman Greenspan's biggest concern is that our economy is growing too quickly. It is this rapid economic growth that has helped to create the surpluses we are discussing, and we should address this issue now.

We must also consider what we have to gain by focusing on debt reduction: an improved credit rating; no more interest payments, and most importantly, the renewed faith of the American people who will finally be able to see that their government lives by the same set of standards.

Do not believe the hyperbole that you will hear from the other side of the aisle. Without H.R. 4601, we will continue to spend and spend. Never in the history of the modern Presidency and Congress has there been an on-budget surplus that wasn't spent. In addition, without this bill the Treasury will continue to lack the financial mechanisms to apply surplus funds to the debt in a manner that is expedient and efficient.

Over the last few months, many of us have written about the need to reduce the debt. We've spoken about it in committees and here on the floor. In fact, many of you supported the goal of debt reduction by voting for the budget resolution. It is time for us to support a tangible, realistic solution.

This Administration has tried to argue that no solution exists. Not only is that statement incorrect, it is also grossly misleading. What the President really wants is the ability to spend every penny that comes into the Treasury.

I feel that we owe the taxpayers of this nation a lot more. After all, the surplus is the result of their hard work and willingness to pay taxes. We need to ask ourselves, "what would the families in my district do if they were suddenly able to pay off money they owe?" For me, that answer is simple. I urge support of H.R. 4106.

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD STATEMENT OF CONGRESSMAN JOHN D. DINGELL HONORING THE MONROE EVENING NEWS ON THE OCCASION OF ITS 175TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 23, 2000

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, today I recognize and pay tribute to The Monroe Evening